handicapped. The number of beneficiaries covered by the organisation during 1996-97 was 164 and during 1997-98, 127. The other organisation is running a Day Care Centre for 50 old persons and also serving 800 old persons under Mobile Medicare Unit.

(c) to (e) Ministry encourages greater involvement of Non-Governmental Organisations in the implementation of its schemes and programmes in the States/UTs, including Himachal Pradesh. The steps taken in this regard include—

(i) Holding meetings with official of State Government/U.T. Admns. non-officials of standing, representatives of voluntary organisationss and NGO forums to explain the schemes/programmes.

(ii) State Governments/UT Administrations are persuaded to sponsor larger number of proposals from NGOs.

Besides the above, the Ministry have reviewed the various schemes/ programmes to bring about the much needed flexibility, open-ness and simplification of norms and procedures.

Stripping of ST Women Surpanch in Rajasthan

1630. SHRI AKHILESH DAS:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention had been drawn to the news item in the 'Hindustan Times', dated August 19, 1998, captioned 'women stripped for unfurling National Flag' to the effect that a women Surpanch who unfurled the National flag in village Thikuri in Dausa district to the Scheduled Tribes; and

(b) if so, the effective steps taken by Govenment to ensure due security for women belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe especially the elected representatives and to protect their dignity as guaranted under the Constitution of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MENKA GANDHI): (a) Yes Sir, Government of Rajasthan has reported that a case No. 311/98 has been registered in Police Station Manpur, district Dausa under Section 147, 323, 504, 452 IPC on 15.8.1998. Accused persons were arrested and Chargesheet in respect of this case has been filed in the court on 31.8.98.

(b) The Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 provides for punishment if a non scheduled caste or a non scheduled tribe persons uses force to any woman with intent to dishonour her modesty. Government of India has been impressing upon the State Governments to accord higher priority for cases relating to vulnerable section of society. Focussed attention is provided on such cases.

In the instant case of 15.8.98, Chargesheet has been filed in the Court within a fortnight of the day of incident and Smt. Mishri Devi (victim), W/o Shri Bhonrilal has been provided full security by the State Government.

Children Engaged in Begging

1631. SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the enormous number of child-work force engaged in begging, not only to support themselves and their family, but also those employed for organised gangs;

(b) if so, Government's assessment about the total population of child labour engaged in begging; and

(c) the steps teken/being taken to effectively check and prohibit employment of children in begging?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MENKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. It is a fact that a number of children are engaged in the practice of begging. While no formal all India assessment has been undertaken by the Government to ascertain the total number of children engaged in begging, a number of State Government's and Union Territory Administrations have enacted their own legislations to prevent beggary and rehabilitate beggars. Under the Juvenile Justice Act 1986, a Central Act, also provisions exist for beggary prevention and for the care, protection and rehabilitation of children found begging. The different State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have established a country wide infrastructure to support implementation of the Act.

मानसिक विकलांग गृहों की स्थिति

1632. **श्री रामजीलाल:** क्या सामाजिक न्याय और अधिकारिता मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार ने देश के विभिन्न भागों में चल रहे मानसिक विकलांग गृहों की स्थिति की जांच करवाई है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) क्या सरकार का ध्यान दिनांक 24 अगस्त, 1998 के राष्ट्रीय सहारा में "बेबसी में दुत्कारे गए, बेबसी में मारे गए" शीर्षक के अंतर्गत प्रकाशित समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है;

(घ) यदि हां, तो गत दो वर्षों के दौरान अवन्तिका मानसिक विकलांग गृह रोहिणी में कितनी मौतें हुई और कितने बीमार हुए; और

(ङ) उसके क्या कारण थे और सरकार द्वारा इस प्रकार की गलतियों के निराकरण के लिए क्या कदम उठाए गए है?

सामाजिक न्याय और अधिकारिता मंत्रालय की राज्य मंत्री (श्रीमती मेनका गांधी): (क) से (ङ) अपेक्षित सूचना सभी राज्य सरकारें/संघ राज्य क्षेत्र प्रशासनों से मंगाई गई है।

Plans to Spread Literacy among Women of Backward Classes

1633. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Hindustan Times, dated the 3rd November, 1998 captioned "Ministries slug it out over literacy plan" of Rs. 250 crore intended to spread literacy among women of backward communities in the country;

(b) if so, the budgetary allocations made by Government for the last three years and the expenditure incurred thereon year-wise and State-wise in this regard;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) Government's solutions/attitude in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An allocation of Rs. 250 crore was made in B.E. 1997-98 for the Kasturba Gandhi Swatantrata Vidyalaya Scheme, and this has been carried forward in B.E. 1998-99. No expenditure has been incurred out of the Budget allocation.

(c) and (b) The scheme is under process for obtaining final approval of Government for its various elements and for deciding on the Ministry/Department which should take up its implementation.

TSP in the Tribal Areas of Gujarat

1634. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) for the economic development in the tribal areas of Gujarat is being implemented by Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;